

Mr. FORD. Reserving the right to object, Mr. President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kentucky.

Mr. FORD. Start at 10:30 for 4 hours on Monday?

Mr. LOTT. Yes. Actually, it is 4 hours to be equally divided with 1 hour under the control of Senator JOHNSTON, so there is a total of 5 hours. I really wonder about the need for that length of time, and I had hoped to start earlier—9 o'clock or 9:30 or 10. But at the request of the distinguished Senator from Georgia, we are going to begin at 10:30. So, first of all, we are agreeing to more time, and I wonder about that need.

Mr. FORD. I am not worried about how the watch is made here. I am just worried about the time. So we start at 10:30. There will be 4 hours equally divided, and then an additional hour. That will be all done on Monday?

Mr. LOTT. That would all be done on Monday. That is correct.

Mr. FORD. Then we vote on Tuesday.

Mr. LOTT. That is correct.

Mr. FORD. I thank the majority leader.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I would like to say that we expect to get other work done on Monday. Hopefully, we will be able to spend some time on the Interior appropriations bill, and there is still a strong likelihood or even a probability that we will have a recorded vote or votes on Monday night after 5 o'clock. I advised our conference at our policy luncheon on Wednesday that that would be my intent.

I just do not see how we can get our work done in the next 30 days if we do not have any votes late on Wednesday night, if we do not have any votes all day on Monday, if we do not have any votes on Tuesday morning. I am perfectly willing to do most of this without votes, but I have to do what is necessary to try to keep our attention and get focused on the work and try to produce results. But this is a fair agreement, and I appreciate that. That is the way we need to continue to try to work. As the Democratic leader and I have talked, we will just take it one step at a time. This is one more positive step. As to what we have to do on Monday night, that will be determined by what happens today, tonight, and in the morning. If we make progress, we have good cooperation, it may be that we will not need recorded votes on Monday night. But we will continue to work, and as soon as we make a final determination with regard to Monday night, we will notify all Senators so they can plan what time to come back in here. I have urged our colleagues to be back in here by sundown on Monday so that we can get work done. I hope that we will do that.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection to the unanimous-consent request of the majority leader? Without objection, it is so ordered.

MEASURE PLACED ON CALENDAR—S. 2053

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I understand there is a bill due for its second reading.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is correct.

The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2053) to strengthen narcotics control reporting requirements and to require the imposition of certain sanctions on countries that fail to take effective action against the production of and trafficking in illicit narcotics and psychotropic drugs and other controlled substances.

Mr. LOTT. I object to further proceedings on this matter at this time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. LOTT. The bill will be placed on the calendar.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The bill is being placed on the calendar under rule XIV. Objection is heard.

DEPARTMENTS OF VETERANS AFFAIRS AND HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT, AND INDEPENDENT AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 1997

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report H.R. 3666.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 3666) making appropriations for the Department of Veterans Affairs and Housing and Urban Development, and for sundry independent agencies, boards, commissions, corporations, and offices for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1997.

The Senate resumed consideration of the bill.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, one final question in that I see the leader is still here. He has an amendment at the desk, and it is obviously one that there is a great deal of interest in on all sides. I wonder if he is ready to lay down his amendment. If we could do that here in the next few minutes and get a time agreement, that would help us get moving on what obviously is an amendment with a lot of interest.

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, I would not be able to lay it down until 11 o'clock, but I think I could lay it down within the next 15 minutes. I have a couple of conflicts that I need to address, but I will be ready to do that in the not too distant future.

Mr. LOTT. I believe that will be fine. I appreciate it.

Mr. President, I believe we have amendments the managers can act on in the meantime, and we will be ready to go around 11 o'clock.

Mr. BOND. Mr. President, we have made good progress on the bill so far. As the majority and minority leader discussed, we do have one major amendment, the veterans health care amendment, the veterans entitlement amendment, to be proposed by the minority leader. We were hoping to get a time agreement on that.

As I look down the list, there are a number of amendments relevant to the

VA-HUD bill, and I ask Senators to come to the floor. Some of these I still hope can be worked out by agreement and taken without a vote. A couple people on our side of the aisle have suggested that they want votes but would be willing to take very short time agreements on them. For the most part, we hope to be able to finish those.

There are quite a few amendments that are not relevant to the VA-HUD bill. I hope they can be held for bills which are related to the subject matter. There are some on both sides. Nobody has a monopoly on those. But if we are to continue the very important work of the many agencies that are included in this bill, we really do need to get this measure passed, sent to conference, worked out, and sent to the President. As I have stated on previous occasions, lifting the ceiling on the Ginny Mae loans will permit the sale of mortgages from the Veterans' Administration and FHA which otherwise would come to a halt.

There is a matter, a very important matter, with continuing the availability of flood insurance that is dealt with in this measure. I urge my colleagues on both sides not to put in amendments which more appropriately belong on other measures or which are likely to lead to extensive discussions. We are open, ready for business, and we would like to get this resolved in the daylight. It would be a real pleasure to pass one in the light of day, and if we work cooperatively, we have a chance of doing that today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Ms. MIKULSKI. I share the goal of the Senator from Missouri to move in a well-paced way on this bill. I wonder, while we are waiting for the Democratic leader to come to offer his veterans medical care amendment, if we could have a quorum call and let us look at some of the amendments that maybe we could zip trip through once there is concurrence. Maybe while we are waiting for the Democratic leader to come we could actually dispose of some of those amendments.

Mr. President, I note the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BOND. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. BOND. Mr. President, we have three amendments, I think, that have been cleared on both sides.

AMENDMENT NO. 5187

(Purpose: To amend the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 and for other purposes)

Mr. BOND. First, I send an amendment on behalf of Senator HOLLINGS to the desk and ask for its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.